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POPE NIGHT: FIFTH NOVEMBER. — It is said there are only three places left in New England in which Pope Night continues to be celebrated. These are Newburyport, in Massachusetts, and Portsmouth and New Castle, in New Hampshire. In regard to Newburyport I can only speak from common report; but of Portsmouth and New Castle I can bear eye-witness, or rather ear-witness, for it is a celebration in which noise is the main element. It is boys, however, and rather young boys who maintain a custom once pretty general in the cities and larger towns of New England, and the small boy's enjoyment and way of manifesting himself is and ever has been by making a noise, helping himself thereto by every sort of instrument that will produce the loudest sound with the least music. It has been said that human beings in the various stages of growth, from infancy to manhood, pass through and typify the progressive stages in the development of races. The so-called music of the barbarian and half-civilized man corresponds to the strange and rude sounds which seem to delight the ears of boyhood.

Pope Night, in Portsmouth and New Castle, which is a seaside village below and very near to Portsmouth, is at present celebrated by boys from six to fourteen years of age by the blowing of horns and the carrying of lights of all kinds. They march through the streets in procession, or in small bands, gathering in, as they march, single groups, or dividing again and sending off detachments, so as to leave no street unvisited. The horns are of all sorts, from the penny whistle to those of two and three feet in length. Whence the origin of the custom of blowing horns on Pope Night I am uncertain. But the lanterns and other devices for lighting the darkness of the November night have evidently something to do with the discovery of Guy Fawkes under the chambers of Parliament in the act of blowing them up with gunpowder. In childhood I remember well looking at pictures of the scene which represented armed men with lanterns searching about in a subterranean place while the dwarfish Guy crouched among great casks of supposed gunpowder. Formerly the lights used by the boys in their observance of Pope Night were candles set in hollowed-out pumpkins, the light showing through holes in the shells of the pumpkins, cut to represent a very squat human face. To the lighted pumpkin-heads have now been added all sorts of illuminations, chiefly lanterns and torches.

There is no doubt that in Portsmouth at least Pope Night has been observed from the earliest times, and formerly by older boys than at present; those indeed who knew what they were celebrating and in which they took a serious interest. It is doubtful if the children who now take a part in it know what their own act signifies or commemorates. I shall presently produce a curious proof of this in the case of the boys of New Castle. It is a very singular fact that in Portsmouth, which long since outgrew its early local boundaries, the observance of Pope Night is entirely confined to the

ancient portion of the town. This portion has remained substantially unchanged since the colonial period; and along with its antique houses, streets, alleys and docks, there remain the remnants of old families, many local names and traditions, and this historic survivor of the observance of the Gunpowder Plot. But it will not apparently survive much longer in Portsmouth. Every year the interest grows less and less and the boys who take part in it fewer and of a younger age.

The same may be said of New Castle, where even the name, *Pope Night*, has become confounded and the whole meaning of the celebration obliterated. It sufficiently attests the easy loss of the primitive significance of customs and observances and the complete transformation of their names, to note that in this obscure village the name *Pope Night* has undergone the absurd change to *Pork Night*.

John Albee.

CHILD AND SNAKE. — The legend of which French and American forms are given in the *Journal* (vol. v. p. 169) exists also in India. Sir Edwin Arnold, in "India Revisited," gives the story as related to him by a Hindu of his own child, whom he one day saw sharing her milk with a large cobra, and pushing his head out of the bowl when she wished to take her turn.

SIGN OF THE CROSS MADE TO AVERT ILL-LUCK. — To the query made in the same number, why the making of the cross on the ground averts ill-luck, the following answer is suggested: May it not confuse, or send a counter-current across the evil influence? As Mr. Leland tells us in "Gipsy Sorcery," complications of tracery in ornamentation were supposed to have that effect. So in mesmerizing, cross passes break up the condition which direct passes have induced. Perhaps the origin of crossing one's self was to block the way, so to speak, of a stream of ill-will poured from adverse powers, in or out of the flesh.

Louise Kennedy.

CONCORD, MASS.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FOLK-LORE OF NEW ENGLAND. — The following items may be added to those included in a previous article (vol. iv. p. 253).

BURNING OF AN AMPUTATED LIMB. — I recently assisted in the amputation of the foot of a man who had had it crushed on a freight-train. After the operation, the friends questioned what should be done with the amputated foot; one promptly decided the matter, by saying that it should be burned, and not buried, in order that the stump should not always continue to be painful, and the man troubled by disagreeable sensations, as would surely follow if the foot were put into the ground. It was accordingly cremated.

PRESERVATION OF HUMAN FLESH. — In Grafton County, New Hampshire, in the beginning of the present century, a boy was scalded so badly that a portion of skin sloughed off, fully one inch in diameter. The boy's mother preserved the section of skin in a dried state as long as she lived, which was over thirty years. She kept it very choicely among her valuable trinkets. When the boy became of age he picked up his clothes and started off to begin life for himself. The parents never heard of him